

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03
DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13 JUSE-00 NSAE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 0555

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR PINR CU US
SUBJ: SIXTY MINUTES TV PROGRAM ON CASTRO AND COCAINE

1. USINT OFFERS FOLLOWING ITEMS OF INFORMATION WHICH HAVE BEARING ON ALLEGED CUBAN LINK WITH EXILE GUILLERMO HERNANDEZ CARTAYA IN FINANCING OF COCAINE TRAFFIC. REPORTAGE OF CUBAN STATEMENTS IN PARA 2 IS NOT INTENDED TO SUGGEST THAT THERE IS TRUTH IN CITED CUBAN ALLEGATIONS, BUT ONLY TO INDICATE THAT MEDIUM-LEVEL BANK OFFICIALS NOT ONLY DO NOT APPEAR PROTECTIVE OF HERNANDEZ CARTAYA, BUT APPARENTLY ARE HOSTILE TO HIM.

2. USINT OFFICER, IN JANUARY 9, RPT JANUARY 9 CONVERSATION WITH NATIONAL BANK OF CUBA ADJUNCT VICE-PRESIDENT RAUL AMADO-BLANCO AND SUB-DIRECTOR RAFAEL HERNANDEZ ON OTHER MATTERS, MADE PASSING MENTION TO ANNOUNCEMENT IN PRESS OF USG INVESTIGATION INTO HERNANDEZ CARTAYA'S FINANCIAL AFFAIRS. AMADO-BLANCO AND HERNANDEZ, RECALLING THAT THEY HAD BELONGED TO SAME TENNIS CLUB AS HERANANDEZ CARTAYA BEFORE REVOLUTION, REMARKED THAT HE WAS A "SHADY CHARACTER". THEY SAID THAT, AS INVESTIGATION PROCEEDED, IT WOULD BECOME APPARENT THAT HERANANDEZ CARTAYA WAS HEAVILY INVOLVED IN CIA ACTIVITY. THEY MENTIONED IN THIS CONNECTION SOME UNSPECIFIED TIE BETWEEN HERNANDEZ CARTAYA'S PURPORTED CIA ACTIVITY AND CUBAN EXILE RAFAEL
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DIAZ BALART. USINT OFFICER DID NOT PURSUE MATTER FURTHER.
(COMMENT: DIA BALART WAS A LEADER OF BATISTA YOUTH MOVEMENT AND A PROMINENT FIGURE IN MIAMI ANTI-CASTRO MOVEMENT. HE WAS ALSO, INCIDENTALLY, FIDEL CASTRO'S EX-BROTHER-IN-LAW, ALTHOUGH APPARENTLY CONSIDERABLE ANTAGONISM EXISTED BETWEEN TWO.)

3. WITH REGARD TO DRUG TRAFFIC IN GENERAL, CUBANS, PARTICULARLY DURING JANUARY COAST GUARD-BORDER GUARD TALKS, EXPRESSED TOTAL AVERSION TO DRUG TRAFFICKING. THEY SAID THEY WERE WILLING TO COOPERATE WITH COAST GUARD BOTH IN EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND PARALLEL ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS TO STEM FLOW OF DRUGS NORTH. CUBANS STATED THAT, INDEED, THEY HAD ALREADY SEIZED 533 THOUSAND POUNDS OF MARIHUANA FROM UNITED STATES-BOUND TRAFFICKERS (SEE HAVANA 202).

(COMMENT: WE UNDERSTAND FROM COAST GUARD THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETECT SMALL VOLUME DRUG SHIPMENTS SUCH AS COCAINE.) CONCERNING DOMESTIC PENALTIES FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING (WHICH APPLY TO TRAFFICKERS SEIZED ENROUTE TO US), CUBANS HAVE RECENTLY INCREASED PENALTY TO THREE TO EIGHT YEARS JAIL, WITH INCREASE UP TO FIFTEEN YEARS IF MAJOR VOLUMES ARE INVOLVED. (SEE HAVANA 360).
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